

## UTONIUM

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the gastro-intestinal system. The primary aim was to protect American workers working with plutonium. It was essentially a man-made hygiene experiment," connected with atomic bomb production, Bale said.

What we found out is that the urine is not excreted rapidly and in some doses it becomes carcinogenic," he said. "The finding has been confirmed in experiments on animals.

The doses given the patients from about two to more than 100 times the present permissible dose, none of these doses was Bale said. I have mixed feelings about the invent and I know it would be lied as an unethical experiment," Bale said. "But it seemed to be a useful purpose at the time and are in the middle of a war."

Dr. James Liverman, a University of

SAC Medical Center spokesman, said the doses given the patients were given "trace amounts of radioactive plutonium" at Strong during wartime project.

He said the university believed the patients knew they were part of a scientific investigation and "we also believe the patients voluntarily consented."

"As far as we can determine, there was no adverse effect on the patients' health as a result of the studies."

All of the 18 subjects in the experiment nationwide were considered terminally ill at the time.

Three of the subjects tested nation-wide are alive today. Dr. James Liverman of the Energy Research and Development Administration said yesterday.

One of the subjects, a black man, now living in Texas, was the only one to get the maximum dose. Liverman said. He said the man was injected in the leg, below the knee, about 48 hours before the leg was amputated at the knee because of existing cancer.

The agency's fact sheet on the experimental injections said that seven people who received them lived less than one year afterwards; three lived between one and three years; two between 14 and 20 years; one 28 years, and the fate of two is unknown.

Thirteen of the human guinea pigs were men and five were women. 15 were whites and three were blacks, and most were middle-aged adults, although the age span ranged from 4 to 65, the fact sheet said.

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# Humans injected with plutonium at Strong

By MAURICE H. THOMPSON  
D&C Staff Writer

Strong Memorial Hospital was one of four hospitals that took part in a secret government project toward the end of World War II, in which 18 cancer patients injected about 18 people with heavy but non-lethal doses of plutonium. The subjects weren't told what they were being given, a University of Rochester professor confirmed yesterday.

Dr. William F. Bale, a professor of radiation biology and biophysics at the University, said the experiment was to determine how much of the poisonous radioactive substance workers in a power plant could withstand.

The Manhattan District Corps of Engineers Project — code name for the government's secret and successful effort to develop the world's first atomic bomb — sponsored the tests at Strong and at the Billings Hospitals at

Part of WW II  
atomic bomb project

the University of Chicago, the University Hospital at the University of California in San Francisco and at a government hospital in Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Dr. Bale, who was at the time commissioned as a researcher for the related atomic Energy Project at the university, said a team of three physicians and nurses at Strong administered the plutonium tests on "about a dozen people who were supposed to have a short life expectancy."

The test subjects, he said, "did not come voluntarily to the project and it is my impression they did not know they were being treated with

plutonium."

The justification for the project, said, was that Americans feared Germans would "develop and explode an atomic bomb before we did."

The U.S. needed to know, he said, what effects plutonium would have when absorbed by the body.

"We had to determine," he said, "whether or not, and how fast plutonium would be absorbed, or excreted."

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